

**Governor's Office of Homeland Security  
and Emergency Preparedness**  
State of Louisiana

JOHN BEL EDWARDS  
GOVERNOR



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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:**  
May 2, 2016

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**FEMA Denies Appeal of Federal Disaster Declaration**

**BATON ROUGE (May 2, 2016)** – The Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) has denied Louisiana's appeal for a major disaster declaration after severe storms and tornadoes devastated several Louisiana communities in late February.

Last month, Governor John Bel Edwards appealed FEMA's original denial of Individual Assistance and Public Assistance (Categories A-G) for Assumption, St. James, and St. John the Baptist parishes.

"We wanted to make every effort to get federal assistance for those impacted by this event," said Governor Edwards. "We felt the scope of their damage and recovery also overwhelmed the capacity of State and local resources. Unfortunately, FEMA did not agree with our assessment. Additionally, we felt a major disaster was necessary because of two other recent emergencies and to help us prepare for the start of the 2016 hurricane season."

According to the National Weather Service, the 13 tornadoes recorded across the southeastern part of the State on February 23, 2016 marked the most tornadic activity ever recorded in such a short period of time in Louisiana. Additionally, Louisiana has suffered two other major natural disasters since January.

Governor Edwards will request that the Small Business Administration (SBA) issue an administrative declaration to provide that agency's support to individuals and businesses within the impacted parishes. The SBA is the federal government's primary source of money for the long-term rebuilding of disaster-damaged private property, offering low-interest disaster assistance loans to businesses of all sizes, private nonprofit organizations, homeowners and renters.

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In a letter to Governor Edwards, FEMA Administrator W. Craig Fugate said, “After a thorough review of all the information contained in your initial request and appeal, we reaffirm our original findings that the impact from this event is not of the severity and magnitude that warrants a major disaster declaration. Therefore, I must inform you that your appeal for a major disaster declaration is denied.”

*You can receive emergency alerts on most smartphones and tablets by downloading the new Alert FM App. It is free for basic service. You can also download the Louisiana Emergency Preparedness Guide and find other information at [www.getagameplan.org](http://www.getagameplan.org).*

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